
The Poor Man's Plea

Against the

Extrabagant Price

O F

C O R N.

G E N X L V I I I

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. Ballant, 202, New York Street,
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Handwritten mark

The Foot Man's Plea

Against the

Extrajudicial Service

OF

C O R M

The Poor Man's Plea
Against the
Extrabagant Price
O F
C O R N.

W I T H A N
Enquiry into the C A U S E S , and
R E M E D I E S thereof.

And PROPOSALS for the Reducing Corn
in ENGLAND to such a Rate, as the
Rich may not Lose, nor the Poor be Starv'd
or Undone.

G E N. XLVII. 15.

— *All the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give
us Bread : for why should we dye in thy presence ? for
the money faileth.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. Baldwin, near the Oxford-Arms
in Warwick-Lane. MDCXCIX.

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The Poor Man's Plea
Nov. 8, 1938
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Against the

Extravagant Waste

CORN

WITH A
Inquiry into the Causes, and
Remedies thereof.

AND PROPOSALS for the Reducing Corn
in ENGLAND to such a Rate, as the
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or Undone.

G. E. N. KILN
— All the Egyptians came into Joseph, and said, Give
us Bread: for my people are dead in thy presence: for
the money faileth.

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REASONS of, and REMEDIES for the Extravagant Price of Corn.

IT was the Expectation of the greatest part of the Kingdom, especially among us of the Poorer sort, that Peace and Plenty would have come hand in hand; that as we might have Eat our Bread in Peace, so having nothing to do but live on our honest Labour, we should not question but to have Bread to our Peace.

The whole World, we believe, will acknowledge, That as the Richer part of the Nation have contributed their Money for carrying on the Chargeable part of the War, so the Poorer sort have carried on the Bloody part with a Zeal equal to their Duty. If the Merchant has born the Passive part of the War, we have performed the Active; we have been no more sparing of our Blood, than they have of their Treasure; our *Lives* have gone as fast as their *Fortunes*.

The King has generously acknowledged it in his several Speeches to the Parliament, and on all occasions abroad, and his Bounty has oftentimes rewarded it; we have been, under his Conduct, the Bulwarks of the *English* Property; our selves that went abroad, and us the rest who staid behind, ready to serve upon occasion, were the hands by which the Estates of the Rich were defended abroad, and increased at home.

The War is now over, our Arms are laid down, we can no longer live by them, but we return to our Neighbours and Friends to live comfortably and honestly on our Labour, and instead of that, we find our selves and them also reduc'd to Misery and Scarcity in the midst of Peace. Honest Wages won't feed us; Labour and Hunger can never agree; for where a Man is willing to work, and has Employment to work at as formerly, and yet cannot live, there seems to be no remedy there, but starving.

In other Cases the Poor have complain'd of the Decay of Trade, and want of Work; Acts of Parliament without number have been made to employ the Poor, and to force them to work; and the very Preamble of several Projects run for the employing of the Poor as a Title so taking, and of so general a good, that every Under-



Undertaking must be thought the better of for it.

Hospitals and Workhouses have been erected to set the Poor at work; and Men have been applauded, and chosen Parliament-Men for it, perhaps one of the chief Ends in doing it; and large Charities and Legacies have been left for that End. But this is all to no purpose; for now the Poor Man may work very hard, and all his Week's Pay, especially if he have any Family, shall not find them in Bread. We can easily make it appear, where for 9 s. a Week, which a poor Man works for, even here in London, many a man keeps his whole Family of a Wife and five Children; and as Cases go now, 8 s. of that 9 s. shall go every Week for Bread.

And the Author of this Book affirms, That he saw in a part of *England*, not above 100 Miles from *London*, within a Month past, a poor Man who workt for 4 s. per Week, give 3 s. 6 d. of it for a Bushel of Oatmeal for Bread; and his Wife with three Children, too small to work, had no other Food to live on.

If all this Misery were a Judgment from Heaven upon us, we had nothing to do but Petition Heaven for Mercy; Fasts, and Days of Humiliation.

liation were the proper Applications both of Poor and Rich : But the Contrary is manifest ; this happens when our Barns are full , and the Stock of Corn , especially in most Parts of *England* incredibly Great ; when we ought to be giving God thanks for Plenty ; and when all the Farmers in *England* are Rich ; when the Merchants are Exporting it to Foreign Parts , and whole Fraights go abroad to our Neighbours.

Before we therefore descend to the particular Occasions of this present Grievance , we shall give a short , but very faithful Account of the State of the last Harvest in most parts of *England*. And that the Author hereof may not be tax'd with taking Matters on Report , he assures the World that he has been Accidentally an Eye-Witness of it in above Five and twenty Counties through which he has travelled since the latter end of *July* last ; in all which Places he has been a very diligent Observer of the Crop of Corn on the Ground , and the Season of its getting in ; and this will be necessary to insist on , in order to prove the former Assertion , That the present Dearth is not occasioned by a Scarcity , or real want of Corn in the Nation ; but

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The County of *Kent* had the most damage done to their Wheat of any County in *England*, and that not by Rains, for they had in most Places of the County a pretty good Harvest, but very much of the Wheat *was fallen*, or lodg'd, as they call it; which, as a very Skilful Husbandman in the County inform'd me, was thus occasioned. The Spring was very backward, and that kept the Corn down till the latter end of *May*; for on the 10th of *May* the Ground was covered with Snow, and the Corn was not run up to any thing of a Stalk, till the very Ear was shot almost out of the Blade; this occasion'd the Stalk to be so weak, that it could not bear the Ear, but lodg'd with the least wet or wind; however, the continued good Weather in *July* and *August*, gave the Corn so much time to knit and kearn, *as they call it*, that it lay in a tollerable condition, for there was not one shower of Rain to do any damage from the 14th of *July* to the 28th of *August* in all the Southern and Western Parts of *England*.

The County of *Kent* had a very good Season for Inning their Wheat and Rye, especially the Southern part of *Suffex* and *Hampshire*, which are very great Corn-Countries, had a rare Harvest, and a very great Crop, insomuch that a Person

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in *Suffex* near *Chichester* being wrote to, to buy up a quantity of Wheat for *London*, forbore to buy, and wrote back to his Friend that he would not advise him to buy, for in all probability Corn would be very cheap, they having a very great Crop, and very well got in, and that every body was striving to get their Corn out to go to *Farnham* Market before the Price Fell. This Letter was dated the 4th of *September*, after the Harvest was over.

Wiltshire is the next County, and one of the greatest Corn Counties in *England* from *Salisbury* to *Warminster*, and about to the *Devizes*, and thence to *Marlborough*. The Author of this Paper affirms, he saw the Harvest actually begun, a very great Crop on the Ground, and in particular he heard several of the Country People say, That in all probability Corn, especially *Wheat*, would be very cheap, for that there was twice the quantity of Wheat sown in that County that us'd to be sow'd formerly; and at *Warminster*, which is the greatest Corn-Market in *England*, where no Corn is either bought or sold for *London*, the best Wheat sold for 5 s. 8 d. per Bushel the 10th of *August*, which would not have been, if there had not been a prospect of a very great Crop.

The

The next Corn Countries are *Barkshire*, *Bucks*, and *Oxfordshire* ; here 'tis own'd they had a dripping Harvest, being later than usual ; but withal they had a vast Crop, and got their Corn in tolerably well. To go Eastward, *Essex*, which is a County of a vast extent, and full of Corn, had the best Crop that has been known in that County for many years, and the best Harvest-time. *Suffolk* and *Cambridgshire* had the like ; if any Corn receiv'd damage, 'twas the latter part of the Barley. For I saw New Oats sold at *St. Ives* in *Huntingdonshire* for 8 s. 6 d. per Quarter in September.

In *Middlesex*, *Hartford* and *Surrey*, we all know there was a very good Harvest.

Further North the Corn Countries are *Bedford*, *Northampton*, and *Nottinghamshire* ; in all these Three Counties the Crop was good, and the Corn well got in, and begun to sell cheap.

Norfolk, the *Fens*, *Lincolnshire* and *Yorkshire*, were extraordinary late with their Harvest, and the Rains took them ; the damage suffered was indeed very great ; not but that they had, and I affirm it, an extraordinary Crop on the Ground, but it was got in very wet ; and in *Darbishire* so very late, that 'tis doubted whether some of it was ever ripe or not.

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Now these forenam'd Counties having produc'd so much Corn, and so well sav'd, I affirm, had there been no Corn at all in the Counties of York, Lincoln and Darby, yet there need have been no necessity of so extravagant a Rise of Corn.

It is to be observ'd, That it was the middle of September before it was known in any part of England South of the River Trent, that Corn would be Dear : God Almighty was mock'd with ten thousand publick Thanks for a plentiful Harvest ; and we the Poorer part of the People began to be very easy, not doubting, but that with our usual Labour and Industry we might obtain a comfortable Maintenance :

When all of a suddain *most sad and lamentable News* came to Town, That in all the Northern Parts of England, where the Harvest was late, the continued Rains had spoil'd all the Corn ; the Country was drowned, ruin'd, and the Poor would be starv'd ; the next Question is at *Bear-Key*, and among the Corn-Factors ; *Oh, Corn will be prodigious Dear, let us buy in good Stocks aforehand ;* the Farmers find the Markets throng'd with Buyers, and Factors running up and down to their Barn doors to buy, before they have thresh'd, and they raise the Price ; and so from one step to another, till the Poor of the
South

South part of *England* must be starv'd, because the Poor of the *North* have a bad Harvest.

But to examine a little the weight of the Case: Supposing all that had been alledg'd concerning *Yorkshire* had been true, which it was not, nor one quarter of it neither.

But supposing it had been all true, the rest of *England* could not be thus affected with the Damage. For,

First, *Yorkshire*, especially in the *East-Riding* of it, is a Country whose Inhabitants cannot spend one half of the Corn they plant; a moderate Crop supplies them with many thousand Quarters to export: And if any person doubts the truth of this Assertion, it may be prov'd, That in the Port of *Hull* only was shipt out in one Year, and that a Year when Corn was not extraordinary plenty, the following quantity, as may appear by the *Custom-house* Books there in the Year 1695. of Wheat 26130 Quarter, 5197 Quarter of Rye, 5742 Quarter of Barley, 21909 Quarter of Malt, 8903 Quarter of Oates, 457 Quarter of Beans, in all 68338 of all sorts of Grain in one Year. And in the very last Year, when Corn was very dear here, and the Harvest generally bad, the same Port of *Hull* shipt off several

several sorts of Corn the following Quantities ;
 25919 Quarter of Wheat, 251 Quarter of Rye,
 12240 Quarter of Barley, 16499 Quarter of
 Malt, 9348 Quarter of Oats, 3413 Quarter of
 Beans, 704 Quarter of Peas, 25 Quarter of Tares ;
 in short, The said Port of *Hull* has shipt off one
 time with another, since the War, which is since
 the time the Price of Corn has risen, above
 400000 Quarter of all sorts of Corn : If so,
 then 'tis manifest, that there was growing in those
 Parts so much Corn more than the Inhabitants of
 those Countries could consume. And if so, then
 suppose there was Sixty thousand Quarter of
 Corn spoiled in that particular part of the Coun-
 try, which no man that has seen the Harvest
 there, will grant, yet the Country can have no
 want of the Quantity.

'Tis fruitless to trouble the Reader with Par-
 ticulars ; the same Calculation would more
 abundantly hold good in *Norfolk*, a County from
 whence a very great quantity of Corn is shipt
 off from *London*.

Now 'tis plain, a bad Harvest in these Coun-
 tries, provided there be almost any fair Weather
 at all, does not really pinch the Poor ; for there
 never was such a Harvest, but there was Quan-
 tity enough for the Inhabitants ; all the damage
 is

is to the Merchant, the Quantity is lessened, and they cannot have it to Export.

Again, The Quantity of Corn in those Parts is not less now than ever, but being ill gotten in the Quality is worse than usual : Now this would be so far from oppressing the Poor, that could we have but Corn of a mean quality at a mean Price, we should never cry out of starving, if God Almighty sent wet Weather ; and the Corn being ill cur'd, was wet, and grown, and soft, and what not ; yet if we could but have it accordingly, we should thank God 'twas no worse, and complain of no body. But to set an Extravagant Price upon it, because it pleas'd God to send a wet Harvest, is to make a Pretence of God's Judgments, when he sends none ; and to prey upon the Poor, to raise Estates out of them.

'Tis plain, the Bad Weather has only affected the Quality of the Corn, and not much of that neither ; and whoever will examine the Custom-houses at *Hull*, at *Lynn*, at *Wisbich*, *Wells*, *Boston*, *Yarmouth*, &c. they will find as much Corn shipt from thence this Year as ever.

How then can there be a want of Corn ? If the Country could spend the quantity, the course of Trade wou'd stop the sending it away ; and if they

cannot spend the Quantity, then there can be no Scarcity; and if there be no Scarcity, why should the Poor pay a double Price for it?

To remedy this, our Lords *Vice-Roys* Justices, what d'ye call 'em, (for we poor Folk don't understand hard Names) have published Orders and Proclamations that Corn shall not be forestall'd, nor Bought, nor Sold, nor Exported, but so and so, as the Law directs; in which they have done as much, saving our Duty to His Majesty's Officers, as if they had done nothing at all: For to tell us of Old Acts of Parliament made above 150 years ago, in the Reign of good King *Edward* the Sixth, since which all this Evil is grown, is to tell us nothing to the purpose: For though no Corn be to be sold but at the Markets, yet if the Farmers, who are now grown rich out of the Ruins of the Poor; and the Factors, who buy in one place to remove to another, agree not to sell but at such a Price, the poor man must give that Price if he has it, or go without it, and starve.

It is as pernicious to the Poor, if a Rich Farmer have a great Stock of Corn by him, and won't sell, as if a Corn-factor bought the same quantity and laid it up; for he is as much a Foretaller of the Market who lays by his own
Corn,

Corn for a dear time, as he that Buys another man's Corn and lays it up. It is not Names and Notions which make things differ, but the things themselves; causes and consequences are fullen and the same, let us suppose or misname them how we please; 'tis all one to the Poor, whether the Farmer or the Foretaller, the one by buying up, and the other by keeping at home, make Corn dear; if the Corn be dear, that is the grievance we feel, and that is the injustice that ought to be rectified; for it is really a piece of injustice, and that the most barbarous that can be suffered; That when God's bounty has given plenty of Provisions, the Rich should engross that Benefit, and the Poor suffer a Famine.

If the wealthy rich part of Mankind were the sufferers as well as some of them are the gainers in this matter, the Poor would not have so good a Plea. Massanello had never made that prodigious Revolution at Naples, if the Gabels on Corn had been paid by the Rich only. 'Tis nothing to us what the projects of the Gentlemen, Tradersmen, and Farmers, bring to pass upon themselves, for no part of Mankind are concern'd for the mischief they do not feel: But there is no proportion between the injury done a

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Trades-

Tradesmen, who lives by his Shop, or Traffick, and perhaps on Credit, and whose gains are large, to whom 2 s. or 3 s. a Bushel on his Corn is but a small intrenchment on his expences, and may be spar'd from the luxurious part of his life; and a poor Labouring-man, who Works hard for about 6 s. to 10 s. per Week, and has a Family to maintain, when at the Weeks end almost all his Earnings go to buy him Bread, and in some parts of *England* it won't do that, but they are forced to make Bread of Oats, Beans, nay, in some places, of Acorns and Turnips, or any thing.

'Tis true, no man ought to complain of any thing for which he cannot propose a Remedy, and this case is so easy, that any body may prescribe it; but because also good Manners directs us not to impose upon our Superiors, we shall in the Name of all the Poor in *England* who are of our Mind, lay down several Methods for the preventing this great abuse, by which the Poor may be relieved, and yet the Farmer have a very good Price for his Corn.

For Example:

First; The stating a regular and exact Price for Corn all over the Kingdom, at which Price

no

no man should refuse to sell, nor no man dare to take more.

It may be Objected, That in some parts where there is an overplus of Corn, it is for the supply of London, &c. and if they want that overplus, it must be dear at London.

This Head, like a concise Doctrine, is to be taken a pieces, and handled in Branches.

1. *Stating a Price* ; that is, by the Magistrate: Suppose by an Order of Sessions, save only that they are Courts, generally speaking, which mind nothing; but an Order of Sessions made in this case, in which the Poor would be so much concerned, 'tis supposed they would take care to see it executed.

2. *An exact and regular Price* ; not that Corn in all parts of the Kingdom should, like a Shilling, be of the same exact Value, for that would not be equal, because the circumstances of several parts of the Kingdom differ too much to allow it; nay, even the value of the Shilling it self is in a manner varied; for though the real name is continued, and a Shilling is worth so many Pence every where, yet because they cannot lower the rate of Money to the value of Labour and Provisions, that Labour, and

those Provisions are multiplied in Proportion to the value of the Money, which is equivalent; and so of Corn in those Countries where much Labour goes for a little Money, more Corn must go for a little Money than in other places; suppose, for instance in these Southern parts of England, where a Day-labourer can gain 9 s. per Week for his Labour, Corn were stated at 5 s. per Bushel for Wheat, in those Countries where they can for the same Labour gain but 4 s. per Week, that Price on Corn would be equivalent to 10 or 11 s. per Bushel, which would ruin the Poor of those parts. By a regular Price therefore, I mean, a Price in Proportion to the rate of the Poor man's Labour in every County.

3. *At which Price no man should refuse to sell*; that is, no man who had Corn to sell, or no man should refuse to sell his Corn at that Price, unless he would make Affidavit, *if required*, That he had no more Corn than he had occasion to use, either for Seed for his Land, Provender for his Cattel, or Food for his own Family.

3. No man should dare to take more; every man who offered to take more Money, or other Consideration for the Price of Corn, than such as should be ordered by the Magistrate, should forfeit his Corn, and 20 l. to the Person Informing.

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There would then be no need of Proclamations and Orders from *Whitehall* to revive old dormant Acts of Parliament, which have been out of use these Hundred Years; Forestallers, Regraters, and Engrossers of Corn, would as effectually be spoiled, as the Clippers of Money are by our New Coin; there would be no such Trade because they could get nothing by it; no man would buy Corn to lay up for a dear time; no Farmer would keep Corn in his Barn in hopes of bringing it out to a better Market, since every man would know at first to a tittle what his Corn would produce.

Innumerable mischiefs would be prevented by such a Method as this; 'twould preserve the value of Lands, by preventing the price falling to an excessive low rate, as it was in 1686. when the best Wheat was sold at 2*s.* 6*d.* per Bushel, by which the Farmers were undone, and in a few Years must all have been broke, Landlords must have turn'd Farmers themselves, or have sunk their Rents.

Corn at 3*s.* a Bushel Wheat, and 20*s.* per Quarter Barly, hurts not the Poor or the Rich in these parts, the Poor may work and live, and the Farmer may pay his Rent and thrive. 'Tis true in those parts from whence Corn is brought to
London;

London, they must have so much difference in their stated Price, as will answer the Carriage to Market, but then it must not be so large a difference as to encourage the carrying it from those remote places where it is stated at too much a lower rate; for if the difference of the prices of Corn answers but just the expence of removing, then there will be no removings of Corn but what are barely to dispose the overplus; for instance, suppose the County of *Norfolk*, which sends much Corn to *London*, the price of Corn at *London* being just as much more than in *Norfolk* as will carry the Corn to *London*, and pay the charge of Factorage and Expences, then all the Corn which they cannot destroy in *Norfolk*, will be sent to *London*; and because the Price at *London* will but just pay those Charges, therefore there will be no more carried thither than barely the overplus.

It may be Objected here, But then they will Export it beyond the Seas ---- With all our hearts; for if we can but have it at the stated Price what we want, let them send the rest where they please; nay, 'twill forward the Exportation; and all men know, that the
more

more Corn is sent abroad, the better for *England*, provided we have no want of quantity at home.

England is the best Country in the world for wholesome good Laws, and the worst for observing them; Penalties of Acts of Parliaments are the least inflicted here of any part of *Europe*; and a thousand Orders of Sessions are made in every County, to one that is observed, or put in execution. But though this be too true, yet this is so plain an Act, and so very essentially beneficial to the Poor, that were this Law once past, and we did not see it executed, we would never pretend to complain any more, for here every Poor man would be the Party grieved, and the Magistrate to do himself justice. Here it may be said,

There are two grand abuses on the Poor at this time; which they suffer tamely, and so they may this; They are, the Baker of Bread, and the Alehouse-keeper.

We have as firm Laws in *England* as need be to compel the Victualler to sell a certain Measure of Drink, mentioning what Pots and what Price; and 'tis in the power of every Poor man to Prosecute them.

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And the like for the Assize of Bread, in which the Bakers, especially out of *London*, put what they please upon the Poor.

And in both these, the Poor pay in their own wrong as much Money as in the whole Kingdom would amount to a very large Tax. But of both these it may be said, the Poor are not so very much wrong'd, because they can refuse to Buy at those Houses. But here the case differs; for all men must have Corn both for Bread and Drink; and if the Law empowers a Poor man to go to a Farmer for a Bushel of Corn, and give him 5 s. for it, he won't be such a Blockhead to give him Eight: Besides, at the Alehouses men are not so inquisitive as they will be in the Markets; for he that goes to the Alehouse, goes for his Pleasure or Extravagance; but he that goes to Market for Corn goes for a serious Necessity.

This stating a general Price of Corn would effectually cease the contention, you would see then quickly, that there is no want of Corn in *England*, the Poor need not fear a Dearth; ye might let People buy by Samples, or at Barn-doors, or any where, carry it and remove it at pleasure, for few People would
give

give it house-room any longer than till they could be rid of it.

'Tis strange to me our wise Governors should never think of a Method so equal, so unexceptionable, so fair; a method that would make one of the greatest, the nicest, and most difficult Trades in the Kingdom, be the veriest road and high-way, that every Carrier's Horse might tread it, the greatest Novice in Trade in the Kingdom might be employed in it; Corn would no longer be a circulating Commodity, 'twould never go in to more hands than needs must; the Rich would not be hurt, the Poor would be pleas'd, the Farmer would be easy; and when God Almighty sends a plentiful Crop, we should feel it, and know when to thank him for it.

'Tis confess'd this way of placing Corn at a certainty, would require a great deal of Prudence and Conduct in the Justices of the Peace of the several Counties to whom it was referr'd; but all this prudence and conduct would refer more to the Honesty than the Difficulty of the matter; for if they are

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men fearing God and hating Covetousness, nay, if they are but the latter, (for as to the former 'tis not much to be expected among our Country Gentlemen;) if they are but disinterested and impartial, the thing would be easy enough.

But in order to make a thing of this consequence as solemn and as certain as it is considerable, it would be a thing well worth the consideration of the Government, whether an Assembly of Justices from all the Counties in England, Two Justices of the *Quorum* from each County, to Meet in one place once a Year about a Fortnight after Harvest, empowered by Commission to settle the Price of Corn for that Year, with an Authority to Print and Publish their Resolves, and enforce the Execution; such an Authority as this would oblige the Nation to regard it as a thing of more consequence than the Orders of our Country Sessions, than which no Orders in the Kingdom are more ridiculous in themselves, partially as well as foolishly made, and obeyed accordingly.

It were worth while almost to write the Histories of our Country Alehouse-making Justices at their Petty Sessions, Quarter, and General Sessions, where they reel home from making Orders to punish Drunkenness; Swear, and sometimes Quarrel and Fight at holding a Sessions of the Peace, while the business is done by Clerks, Country-Attorneys, Petty-Foggers, Pickpockets, &c.

Indeed the present case of stating the Prices of Corn, is a matter of too much concern to be left to the discretion of the generality of the present Justices, and therefore such a little Parliament of Justices would make the matter easy, and perform it Honestly.

If this be thought too great a trouble to the Gentlemen, and that the Government does not reckon it a matter of moment enough to make it a National concern, the Poor having not of late been much of their care, the following Method may then shorten the work, and make that which really is

an Act of Right and Equity, be an Act of Kindness and Charity.

Suppose an Order be published by such Authority as is sufficient to put it in execution, That whatever the Rate of Corn may be by the management of the Corn-Dealers, Factors, and Farmers, every Poor man who has a Certificate about him to show from the Churchwardens and Overseers of his Parish, that he is a Poor man, and is not Rated in the Books of the Parish to pay Scot and Lot, shall have Privilege to buy so much Corn as is needful for the supply of his own Family, at such and such Price, and no man that sells Corn shall refuse him.

This would in some measure be an equivalent; for if the Richer sort of People will be imposed upon, to whom the damage is not much, let them; but to impose upon the Poor, whose livelihood depends upon it, is to starve and destroy them.

This was a Method Proposed by a very worthy Gentleman lately in a motion made
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in the Parliament for a Tax upon Corn, by which the Rich would have paid a Tax, and the Poor be excused, as reason good they should; nor is this a thing so impracticable as at first it may seem, only that all good Laws begin to be impracticable in *England*; the particular Method would require a large Scheme; but were the Law to be made, the Scheme should not be wanting.

By this Method, that part of the Poor who are visibly Poor, would be relieved, and the Engrossers of Corn would hurt only those who were Rich and out of reach of the injury, if they would not look after it, might let it alone.

If the dearness of Corn had been occasioned by a large Tax, the Complaints of the People would have been very loud, and 'tis strange they should rather be imposed upon by the cunning of Private men, than pay a Tax to the Government. I make no question but the King would have been sufficiently abused for a Tax upon Bread-Corn, and we should have cried out, 'Twas a Government

Government metamorphos'd into a Tyranny, and we should be all starved, and what not; But at the same time we can let the Corn-Merchants and Farmers put what Rates and what Prices they please on Corn; which is in effect, one of the worst ways in the World of laying Taxes, because, as is before-noted, there is no comparison between the Poor and the Rich.

The Poor have a right to the Protection of the Government, and to the care of the Government; the King has entrusted it in his absence to several Gentlemen of the first Rank, but they can never give His Majesty a good Account of their Stewardship, unless they put their hand to this most necessary part of Government.

The Poor are God Almighty's Rent-Charge upon the Rich, and the Rich are bound either to Employ them, or Maintain them, and the reducing the Prices of Corn to a Moderate Rate will do both.

Many

Many other ways might be found out to remedy this Mischief, which the Author thinks 'tis time enough to propose, when he finds these few in a proper way of Execution.

TH E Poor Man's Plea to all the Proclamations, Declarations, Acts of Parliament, &c. Which have been, or shall be made, or published, for a Reformation of Manners, and supplanting Liberty in the Nation. The Second Edition corrected.

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